

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5257

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EXDIS

FOR HABIB FROM SULLIVAN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, RP

SUBJECT: PHILIPPINE BASE NEGOTIATIONS

REF: (A) MANILA 9671 (B) STATE 169597

1. THANKS FOR ACTIONS AND VIEWS REPORTED REF B. I APPRECIATE YOUR ASSURANCES ABOUT WASHINGTON EFFORT TO MEET "TARGET COMPLETION DATES." UNFORTUNATELY, FACT REMAINS THAT THERE ARE CURRENTLY ELEVEN RPT ELEVEN OPERATIONAL CABLES UNANSWERED, SOME GOING BACK AS FAR AS JUNE 21.

2. GIVEN UNDERSTANDABLE IMPATIENCE, SOME DOD MEMBERS OF MY NEGOTIATING TEAM HAVE TELEPHONED WASHINGTON TO ASK FOR EXPLANATIONS OF DELAY. THEY HAVE BEEN TOLD (A) THAT SEPTEMBER DEADLINE ESTABLISHED BY PRESIDENT FORD FOR SUBMISSION OF PHILIPPINE AGREEMENT TO U.S. CONGRESS HAS SLIPPED, BECAUSE GREEK AGREEMENT WILL NOT BE READY AT THAT TIME, AND (B) THAT SECRETARY KISSINGER HAS CANCELLED PLANS FOR VISIT TO ANZUS AND ASEAN CAPITALS WHICH WOULD MAKE AUGUST COMPLETION DATE COMPELLING.

3. IN VIEW OF THESE TWO ALLEGED CIRCUMSTANCES, OUR WASHINGTON COUNTERPARTS REPORTEDLY SAY THEY FEEL NO RPT
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NO URGENCY AND FAIL TO UNDERSTAND OUR UNSEEMLY HASTE.

THEY REPORTEDLY INTEND TO GIVE ALL OUR MESSAGES VERY DELIBERATE CONSIDERATION AND BELIEVE THEY HAVE SECOND PRIORITY TO GREEK NEGOTIATIONS.

4. IF THE FOREGOING IS TRUE, IT MAY EXPLAIN EXCESSIVE DELAYS IN WASHINGTON REACTION TO OUR CABLES. BUT, IF IT IS TRUE, IT HAS NOT BEEN CONVEYED TO ME OR TO PHILIPPINE NEGOTIATORS. WE AND THEY ARE STILL OPERATING ON BASIS UNDERSTANDINGS WE WERE GIVEN IN WASHINGTON THAT WE SHOULD AIM TO COMPLETE OUR WORK IN AUGUST SO THAT AGREEMENT COULD BE SUBMITTED TO CONGRESS IN SEPTEMBER. WE ARE CARRYING ON AT A PUNISHING SCHEDULE OF TWELVE HOURS A DAY OR MORE, EVEN THOUGH SOME OF THOSE HOURS BECOME STERILE THROUGH ABSENCE WASHINGTON RESPONSE TO OUR MESSAGES.

5. YOU HAVE ASKED ME TO GIVE YOU, IN NORMAL CHANNELS, MY VIEWS ON LIKELY NEGOTIATING SCENARIO FOR NEXT FEW WEEKS. I WILL DO SO, AND WILL BASE MY ASSUMPTIONS ON MY CURRENT INSTRUCTIONS, WHICH ARE TO AIM FOR A COMPLETED DOCUMENT IN FIRST WEEK OF AUGUST IN ORDER TO HAVE SECRETARY INITIAL IT DURING HIS VISIT TO MANILA. IF THESE ASSUMPTIONS ARE NO LONGER VALID, PLEASE ADVISE ME SOONEST SO THAT I MAY CALCULATE HOW WE CAN SLOW DOWN OUR PACE, TAKE A RECESS, AND OTHERWISE STRETCH OUT THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS WITHOUT BEING ACCUSED OF BAD FAITH, OR WITHOUT CAUSING AN UNPLEASANT IMPASSE THAT WILL LEAD TO ADVERSE PHILIPPINE REACTIONS.

6. THE KEY TO THE WHOLE PROCESS, IN TIME AS WELL AS SUBSTANCE, WILL BE THE MONEY WE ARE PREPARED TO PUT INTO THE QUID. I AM SENDING USDEL VIEWS ON THIS IN NORMAL CHANNELS AND WOULD ASK THAT YOU AND THE SECRETARY GIVE OUR PROPOSALS FAST AND FULL SUPPORT WITH THE PRESIDENT. DESPITE OMB APPRAISALS, WE ARE NOT GOING TO GET THESE BASES ON THE CHEAP. THE FILIPINOS REALIZE THEY ARE FAR MORE SIGNIFICANT TO US AND SAVE US FAR MORE MONEY THAN THE TURKISH FACILITIES. THE TURKISH BENCHMARK IS THEREFORE COMPELLING.
SULLIVAN

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